

A BLOW AIMED AT ALL OF AFRICA Gadhafi lynched by U.S.-NATO

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Col. Moammar Gadhafi, leader of the Libyan people for 42 years, was brutally targeted, tortured and executed in a series of events on Oct. 20 in the coastal city of Sirte. The city is a bastion of resistance to the U.S.-NATO war in Libya.

Gadhafi, 69, was there directing resistance fighters who have defended the country against an imperialist-engineered civil war and bombing campaign. The war has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Libyans and other foreign nationals. The Libyan state and its supporters have heroically held out for eight months and are still waging a struggle to reverse the counterrevolution financed and coordinated by the U.S.-NATO governments.

Just two days prior to Gadhafi's assassination, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was in Libya, meeting with the "rebel" National Transitional Council regime and calling for his capture and kill-

ing. There have been several attempts on Gadhafi's life since the beginning of the March 19 bombing campaign. Gadhafi's son and three grandchildren were killed in one of them, when their residence came under attack by imperialist warplanes. It has been reported that another one of Gadhafi's sons, Mo'tassim, was captured and executed, purportedly by the NTC rebels, on Oct. 20.

Stories reported by the NTC spokesperson illustrated the inherently dishonest character of the U.S.-NATO rebels. They initially said Gadhafi was killed in a crossfire involving loyalist forces and the NTC rebels. However, this fabrication quickly evaporated when a video shot by someone in the lynch mob showed that Gadhafi was alive when apprehended and extrajudicially killed.

Various reports indicate that the convoy Gadhafi was travelling in was tracked by a U.S. Predator drone. Another account suggests that French Mirage fighter jets

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WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

WHAT 'FREE SPEECH'?

Cops attack OWS camps

Oct. 25 — Despite all the official words of support for "peaceful" protests, all the "sympathy" over the conditions that sparked Occupy Wall Street, all the protesters' efforts not to antagonize the authorities, the police crackdown has begun.

The most recent was in Oakland, Calif., on Oct. 25, when riot-garbed police carrying shotguns stormed Frank Ogawa Plaza at 4:45 a.m. Within a half hour, they had cuffed and arrested several dozen people, trashed their tent city and scattered their belongings. They had first shut down Oakland's Center City, claiming they were "cleaning" the area. Buses were rerouted and downtown BART stations closed for several hours as the city told workers to stay away. Details are still sketchy. Spectators were not allowed as 200 police cordoned off the area.

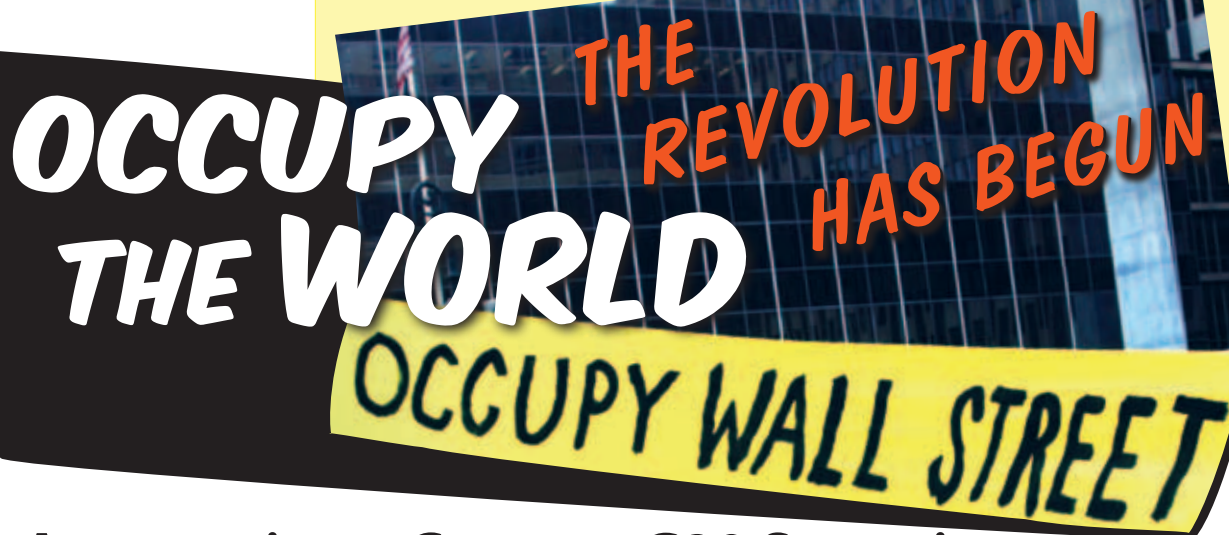
This followed similar attacks elsewhere. Police arrested about a dozen people at Occupy Cleveland on Oct. 21

at 10 p.m., having first blocked access to the area with their cruisers.

The next night was Chicago's turn. An annual National Day of Protest march had targeted police brutality. After a rally, the marchers went to Grant Park, where Occupy Chicago welcomed them. Later that night, the police arrested 130 occupiers, seizing their tents, including a medical aid tent belonging to National Nurses United.

It is no accident that these attacks all took place in cities with large African-American communities. The movement needs to respond: An injury to one is an injury to all!

See workers.org for updates.



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WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Marxist perspective on Middle East struggles

Excerpted from a talk given by Joyce Chediak at the Workers World Party National Conference held in New York City on Oct. 8-9.

Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy was above all a Leninist who described the world situation as a “Global Class Struggle,” with the workers and oppressed nations on one side of the class camp and the imperialists and their agents on the other.

Marcy included in our class camp anti-imperialist oppressed nations, even if they are not communists or workers. This clarification of the workers in the oppressed nations as being on the same side and having a vital interest in the anti-imperialist struggle in the oppressor nations abroad is part of WWP’s fabric.

This is true concerning the struggles in the Arab and Muslim countries. Our party has always been consistent on this. Our newspaper’s first issue in 1959 supported the Algerian revolution.

We look past the form a struggle may take to its class content. Many progressives here did not support the 1979 Iranian revolution because it had a religious coloration, but that was just the form. The substance was anti-imperialist.

When students took over the U.S. embassy in Tehran and held U.S. personnel hostage, anti-Iranian sentiment and anti-Islamic racism swept this country, generated by the government and the establishment media. WWP demonstrated in support of the Iranian revolution then. Marcy explained what the U.S. government had done — stealing the oil, the poverty, the repression and the 1954 overthrow of an elected government. He talked about a long trade union struggle where the bosses wouldn’t budge and the strikers’ families were hungry.

“Would you blame the strikers,” he said, “if they took the company bosses hostage?” He won people to supporting the Iranian struggle.

Marxist-Leninist theory should be used to analyze today’s situation in the Middle East. Not all the struggles are the same. Marxists must distinguish the differences.

While the workers and middle class there seek jobs, economic security and democratic rights, the imperialists have something else in mind.

Until 1989, the Soviet Union was a counterweight to world imperialism and a formidable obstacle to U.S. aggression. Made even more aggressive by the world capitalist crisis, the imperialists now seek to take advantage of the social explosion rocking the Middle East to consolidate their stranglehold there. They have united to attempt to take back all that was blocked from them in the Soviet era.

Publicly U.S. imperialism claims to support the “Arab spring,” but it is selective. When Yemen’s government recently killed 100 people, there was no outrage from Congress or the White House, no U.N. move for a no-fly zone. This is a U.S. client guarding strategic waterways.

Bahrain’s regime has repeatedly attacked anti-government demonstrators. It sentenced doctors who treated wounded demonstrators to 15 years in jail for treason! But Bahrain houses the U.S. Fifth fleet and is a major Gulf oil producer. This is why Saudi troops rode into Bahrain on U.S. tanks to protect the pro-U.S. regime there. NATO is not bombing Bahrain.

U.S. imperialism is going after the Arab governments with some independence — Iraq, Libya and now Syria.

Under the guise of a “humanitarian mission,” the entire imperialist world bombed Libya, a former colonized



Joyce Chediak

country with no ability to defend itself militarily.

The U.S. now threatens the same scenario against Syria. Syria is in a strategic anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist alliance with Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas. This is crucial in holding back the predatory Zionist state from taking over the whole area.

Yet some progressives in the Middle East oppose the Syrian government, as some opposed Gadhafi.

Marxist perspective needed

Marxists call governments like those in Syria and Libya “bourgeois nationalist” — nationalist because they seek to develop their countries free from imperialist domination and bourgeois because they are ruled by an exploiting capitalist class. They seek to push out the imperialists to better exploit the workers, but they have common interest with the workers when imperialism threatens the country’s sovereignty.

Marxist-Leninists support these governments unconditionally against imperialism because they are manifestations of self-determination of the oppressed. However, not every policy is supported. Marxists are for the best interests of the workers. These governments cannot consistently fight imperialism, as the working class can. Vacillating in the anti-imperialist struggle is part of their nature.

Syria has been ruled since 1970 by a secular government dominated by the Arab Socialist Bath Party. The Assad family has ruled for 40 years.

Syria is a “frontline state” with a border with Israel. That has made it an object of constant imperialist and Zionist pressure. It links the Syrian people to the Palestinian struggle. Israel occupied and then annexed Syria’s strategic Golan Heights.

While Syria plays a regionally progressive role now, in 1976 the government intervened in Lebanon’s civil war against a revolutionary Palestinian-Lebanese alliance on the side of Lebanon’s Israeli-armed fascists. Syrian capitalists feared that a revolutionary Lebanon might lead to their overthrow by Syrian workers.

U.S. and Israeli pressure and Israel’s refusal to return the Golan Heights has Syria’s rulers back to an anti-imperialist stance. Despite that, Damascus seeks a better deal in the world capitalist market, which is dominated by Western banks.

During economic downturns, Wall Street forces nationalist governments like Syria to make economic concessions, which attack the workers and establish a pro-imperialist elite, a comprador bourgeoisie that undermines the government’s independence and isolates it from the workers.

In 2006, Syria adopted an International Monetary Fund plan with austerity measures, opening the economy to foreign banks and privatization of industries. For workers, it has meant unemployment, inflation and deterioration in social conditions, but it has benefited businessmen close to the Assad family.

Syria has lost the allegiance of much of its population.

Repression there did not begin with the current demonstrations, but the Assad government has responded to them with force, killing many.

Imperialism has not imposed sanctions on Syria because

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Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson

West Coast Editor: John Parker

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac

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Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

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National Office
55 W. 17 St.
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-909-8964
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617-522-6626
Fax 617-983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-883-2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-738-0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-459-0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
331 W. Main St., Ste. 408
Durham, NC 27701
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713-503-2633
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
1905 Rodeo Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90018
la@workers.org
323-515-5870

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355
sandiego@workers.org

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

ATLANTA

Big business, city officials attempt to evict homeless shelter

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

A campaign launched by major business interests in Atlanta, with the active assistance of elected officials, city administrators and other “civic” organizations, is attempting to evict the metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless from its home.

For 30 years, the Task Force has been a fierce advocate for the rights of poor people to decent shelter, life-sustaining employment, accessible health care and respect. Formed at the initiative of Atlanta’s first African-American mayor, Maynard Jackson, for a number of years the Task Force functioned as a homeless services resource center and oversaw the disbursement of federal grants to service providers.

In the period leading up to the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, the downtown business community stepped up its efforts to rid the hotel, convention and tourist areas of poor people, particularly Black men. Compliant elected officials enacted “quality of life” ordinances that criminalized the poor. Homeless people were given one-way bus tickets out of town, and the neighborhoods where low-income Black workers and seniors lived were bulldozed for Olympic stadiums and parks. All the while, Atlanta’s reputation as the home of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the mecca of Black America was ballyhooed internationally by the image-conscious, corporate public relations machine.

Two days before the Olympics opening ceremony, the Task Force filed and eventually won a lawsuit charging racial discrimination in the ordinances that targeted homeless African-American men. That courageous action earned them the enmity of the Chamber of Commerce, various other business interests and their political allies.

During the administration of Mayor Andrew Young in the 1980s, all of Atlanta’s large public housing was torn down. Some of these large tracts of land remain

empty fields to this day, while on others developers built “mixed income” housing. Most poor families were channeled into the Section 8 voucher program, providing a boon to unscrupulous landlords and speculators. High utility bills, nonrenewal of vouchers and record-breaking unemployment have led many into eviction, homelessness or resettlement in suburbs that lack public transportation and other services.

The Task Force was again in the forefront of publicly condemning these projects, many of which favored the building of housing for the new surge of suburbanites moving into the city. The plan conformed to a long-sought-after goal by corporate interests to change the racial, political and economic demographics of Atlanta.

Building a central resource for the homeless

In 1997, a progressive philanthropist bought a large unused building at the corner of Peachtree Street and Pine, at that time a somewhat run-down area of Atlanta’s well-known main street in midtown Atlanta. She immediately donated it to the Task Force, which envisioned the multi-floored building as a central resource for all the services needed to aid homeless and poor people. Included in the plan was long- and short-term residential housing.

The building required extensive renovation to make it habitable. The Task Force, which had been disbursing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds for years to others, now was obstructed from receiving federal grants. Undaunted, a mortgage was secured, the necessary repairs were made, and the Task Force began operating out of the facility.

For 14 years, the Peachtree-Pine facility has maintained a 24-hour hotline; placed people in emergency, temporary and permanent housing; helped secure identification, Veterans Affairs benefits and food stamps; done job counseling and résumé preparation; assisted placement in addiction treatment facilities; and provided a day shelter in a cavernous room,

so homeless men could escape the elements of heat, rain and cold. Each night 500 to 1,000 men sleep within its walls. Peachtree-Pine also provides computer training, bicycle repair, a clothes closet, library, roof garden and art studio. Every year, thousands have been assisted out of homelessness or been given lifesaving shelter by the Task Force.

Despite these accomplishments, the big business and government campaign against the Task Force has managed to strip it of all of its public funding and most of its large private donations.

A federal judge recently revoked an injunction that had prevented the city of Atlanta from turning off the water at the facility. Lawyers for the Task Force had argued that it was the actions by the city to block funding that prevented the payment of the bill. Although the Task Force owes more than \$147,000, there are developers and others, including the city itself, with even larger unpaid water bills that do not face a cutoff.

In an attempt to expose the machinations of the corporate class that more and more openly runs the city of Atlanta, the Task Force filed numerous lawsuits. The most earth-shattering suit names the city of Atlanta, the Chamber of Commerce, Central Atlanta Progress, Cousins Properties, Emory University and the United Way, among others, of engaging in a criminal conspiracy to obstruct funding, engineer a fraudulent foreclosure of the building and displace Black men from Peachtree Street. The depositions of well-known business leaders, city officials, members of the media and representatives of charities, churches and foundations reveal a shocking story of lies, financial intimidation, blatant collusion and the use of racist imagery to undermine the existence of the Task Force at its Peachtree location.

The concern is that the court proceedings, where all this information can come out, are being delayed while the threats to the shelter are escalating.

A Fulton County Superior Court judge issued a dispossession judgment last week allowing the eviction of the Task Force from the building, but then reversed his order on Oct. 21. The building and its location on Peachtree Street are worth millions of dollars, but a phony “charity” instigated by the Chamber of Commerce bought the mortgage for a pittance and then immediately foreclosed on the Task Force. Declaring that “this deal smelled” to him, for more than a year and a half Judge Craig Schwall had prevented the new “owner” from taking possession of the building while the issue was being litigated. Within a week of the Task Force’s lawsuit being filed, Schwall took it upon himself to abruptly allow the eviction. When Task Force lawyers filed an appeal, he just as quickly reversed himself.

On Oct. 14, participants of Occupy Atlanta, including numerous homeless men and women, marched from their encampment in Troy Davis Park (formerly known as Woodruff Park) in militant solidarity with the Task Force. Taking the northbound lanes of Peachtree Street during the evening rush hour, they focused their outrage at Emory University and Emory Healthcare, which operates a hospital across the street from the shelter. Chanting, “Emory hates the poor, kicks the homeless out the door!” they amassed at the front doors of the medical building, part of a very wealthy private institution funded with huge donations from Coca-Cola. The hospital administration has barred Black men they think are homeless or residents at Peachtree-Pine from entering the food court, which is frequented by many nonhospital users.

The men who shelter at the Task Force building have declared themselves as “Occupy Peachtree” and vow they will not be removed from their home. They have offered an open invitation to Occupy Atlanta to use the facility in any efforts to bring justice to those victimized by the profit-driven banks and corporations.

For more information, go to www.homelesstaskforce.org. □

‘Bail out the people, not the banks’

WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Occupy foreclosed homes!

Taken from a talk by Jerry Goldberg, a Detroit WWP organizer, at the Oct. 8-9 Workers World Party National Conference in New York City.

While the economic crisis is a product of low-wage capitalism, it was the action of the banks, inducing millions of workers to sign over their homes in mortgage refinancings through a criminal enterprise based on fraud and deceit, that staved off the crisis for a number of years by artificially pouring trillions of dollars into the economy, and then caused the bubble to burst with the crash we are still experiencing.

As a result, an estimated 9 million families will have lost their homes to foreclosure from 2009 to 2012 — another 13 million face potential foreclosure in the future. The total lost home-equity wealth due to foreclosures is expected to be \$1.9 trillion for the years 2009-2012. Foreclosures this year alone are expected to total a record 3.8 million homes. The oppressed communities were especially targeted with predatory, racist, subprime

and exotic loans, and are suffering from the complete collapse of housing values, which was the fundamental repository for what wealth may have existed.

When the housing crash hit, the banks, every one of which was a participant in the criminal conspiracy, had their losses covered first by the 2008 \$700 billion TARP bailout. But what is less exposed and even more significant is the continuing bailout engineered through the federal takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

In 2008, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which had formerly been quasi-governmental agencies established to back mortgage loans, were taken over by the federal government. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac began purchasing toxic and failing mortgage securities, paying full price to the banks and financial instruments for mortgages that in fact had lost 50 to 75 percent of their value.

This bank bailout — which will cost taxpayers between \$389 billion and \$1 trillion — means Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, along with HUD [Department

of Housing and Urban Development], now control about 75 percent of all mortgages. When your home goes into foreclosure, the government pays the bank the full amount of your fraudulent loan, and then it’s the government that throws you out of your home. Incredibly, the federal government through Fannie and Freddie is actually more aggressive than the banks in pushing foreclosures and less willing to reduce principal on loans.

People before ‘banksters’!

It’s time to insist that this nationalization of the housing market be utilized to benefit the people and not the banks. Since the government controls 75 percent of mortgages, President Obama has the absolute authority to put an end to foreclosures by executive order, implementing a moratorium on foreclosures that would allow families to remain in their homes based on whatever they can pay. We need to implement this moratorium just like the unemployed councils won foreclosure moratoriums in 25 states dur-

ing the Great Depression: by direct action to stop evictions, moving the furniture back in when the bailiffs remove it.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac owned 242,000 empty homes as of June of this year as a result of foreclosure-related evictions, and this number grows every day. We paid for these homes. They belong to the people. The Occupy Wall Street movement has every right to take over all these homes, turn them over to the homeless, and demand a federal jobs program to train youth to repair them and insure their viability.

In addition, why should the same banks that destroyed the tax base of governmental units at every level have first claim on taxpayer dollars to pay off debt service while public services are destroyed and public workers are laid off? In Detroit, property values have declined by an average of 75 percent due to foreclosures with a resulting decimation of the tax base. Yet, 80 percent of state school aid goes to the same banks that destroyed the city to pay

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Protest shows solidarity between Verizon union & OWS

By G. Dunkel

On the day Verizon announced that its third-quarter profits had jumped to \$1.38 billion, more than 2,000 members of the Communication Workers union, together with contingents from unions including the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union, District Council 37; the United Auto Workers; the Teamsters union; and the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York held a vibrant, militant picket line in front of Verizon’s headquarters on Water Street on Oct. 21.

The picket line was joined by a few hundred people who marched down from Occupy Wall Street at Zuccotti Square. The OWS contingent was warmly welcomed and provided much of the music for the line and the march back to Zuccotti Square.

The CWA suspended its two-week strike against Verizon in mid-August,

when the company agreed to start bargaining. Verizon wants to increase its profits by forcing concessions on its workers’ unions, mainly the CWA and the International Electrical Workers union. A concessionary contract would also undercut unionization efforts in its wireless division, which is almost totally nonunion.

The chants varied. “We are the 99 percent!” and “The people united will never be defeated!” were popular, along with denouncing the “Verigreed” of Verizon. On the march, Teamsters chanted “Whose streets?” and the CWA answered “Our streets!”

After marching around Zuccotti Square, the march headed off to picket a Verizon Wireless store on Broad Street. Some of the CWA members came back to Zuccotti Square to spend the night.

Both the CWA members and the OWS supporters appeared to be very satisfied with their solidarity. □



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Million Worker March supports Occupy Wall Street

The following statement was issued by the Million Worker March on Oct. 17.

The Million Worker March organizers and activists call upon all workers, organized and unorganized, and the unemployed to join and defend the Occupy Wall Street movement. We extend the call to anti-war, immigration rights, environmental and social justice activists to join this movement, which could replicate the Arab Spring here at home.

The MWM, initiated by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 on Oct. 17, 2004, at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., advanced the slogan “mobilizing in our own name,” independent of the two Wall-Street-controlled political parties to address the economic crisis of working people in which the vast majority are under siege financially.

All important social movements that have occurred in this country were started from the bottom up (rank-and-file/grassroots) and not from the top down. The MWM’s mission statement speaks to how ... a handful of the rich and powerful corporations have usurped our government. A corporate and banking oligarchy

changes hats and occupies public office to wage class war on working people. They have captured the State in their own interests. They represent what the OWS activists call the 1 percent, otherwise known as the ruling class.

Like the MWM, the OWS has emerged at a time when the two corporate-controlled political parties are preparing for the presidential election — a smokescreen where billions are spent to promote a top-down and false ceremony of democracy.

Like the MWM, the OWS will be criticized for having demands that are too broad. We have endured more than 50 years of corporate assault on working people, social services, jobs, wages, pensions, health care, public education and housing. The pursuit of endless wars, the lack of a comprehensive immigration policy and the erosion of the environment in pursuit of corporate greed makes it impossible to address all of these issues in a soundbite.

Yet one thing is crystal clear: OWS conveys a definite anti-capitalist message. It is being expressed to the entire world at the temple of American Capitalism — Wall Street. The OWS, while now a major

protest movement against the capitalist elites, must continue to deepen, expand and become a direct challenge to corporate power. Class warfare demands fighting on multiple fronts, and it all leads back to Wall Street. While the officialdom of labor has given verbal support to OWS, the rank and file possesses the real power of the labor movement. It is only through rank-and-file unity that labor’s true power can be realized in this OWS movement. Workers can take action at the point of production and service, as well as put people in the streets.

We must be mindful of attempts to co-opt this movement. Let us not forget the action of the Democratic Party and its surrogates within the AFL-CIO to pressure Wisconsin unions not to initiate any general strike actions in opposition to Gov. Scott Walker’s plans to eliminate collective bargaining for state workers. Wisconsin workers were limited to circulating petitions to recall targeted state Republican elected officials. This took away labor’s only real power, the ability to withhold its labor in defense of collective bargaining.

ILWU Local 10’s Executive Board has



Rally targets unemployment & student debt

A spirited march from the city hall site of Occupy Philly on Oct. 17 focused on joblessness and the trillion dollar student debt crisis. More than 80 protesters chanted, “The banks got bailed out! Students got sold out!” on the way to the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, where Betsey Piette of Workers World Party criticized the \$16 trillion handed over to bankers while 30 million unemployed and underemployed people are ignored.

“No funding cuts, no fees! Education should be free!” and “The people have spoken! The system is broken!” were the chants as Jamila Wilson of the Philadelphia Economic Advancement Collective led the crowd to the regional northeast office of the federal Department of Education. After a student decried her impossible-to-pay-back loans, Darryl Jordon of the Third World Coalition announced a petition campaign to forgive student debt. The average student in the U.S. graduates with a debt load of more than \$34,000.

The next stop was the city courthouse, where Brother Weldon of the Askia Coalition Against Police Brutality put the



student debt crisis into the perspective of other problems faced by communities of color. Attacking stop-and-frisk policies, curfews against youth and the education-to-incarceration pipeline, he defended

political prisoners such as Mumia Abu-Jamal and Marshall Eddie Conway — leaders the system deems too dangerous to allow them freedom on the streets.

– Report and photo by Joe Piette

adopted a resolution to join and defend the OWS and called for other longshore locals to do the same. More importantly, Local 10 is connecting the OWS movement with the Pacific Northwest dockers’ struggle with EGT in Longview, Wash. (EGT is an international grain exporter that is attempting to rupture longshore jurisdiction.) The driving force behind EGT is Bunge Ltd., a leading agribusiness and food company that reported \$2.4 billion in profits in 2010. This company has strong ties to Wall Street. This is but one example of Wall Street’s corporate attack on union workers.

On Oct. 12, the vice-president and secretary-treasurer of ILWU Local 21 in Longview ... were allowed to speak by the organizers of Foreclose on Wall Street West. They explained their struggle to several hundred people attending the rally, which took place in the San Francisco financial district. This is an important and strategic show of solidarity between labor and OWS.

It was Black trade unionists that conceived and launched the MWM. Black workers and other workers of color should play an integral role in expanding the power and influence of OWS. The Black unemployment rate is 24 percent and growing. This needs to be a part of the discussion of the peoples assemblies, as it concerns empowering this people’s movement.

Working people need to have a political expression of our own that is an alternative to the U.S. corporate sector that both the Democrats and the Republicans represent. The timing of the MWM in Washington was to prepare the beginning of a fightback precisely because of the agendas of two political parties, acting as one, the corporate agenda of permanent war, destruction of all social services, Jim Crow and a relentless assault upon working people.

This is an opportune moment for rank-and-file working people to forge a mass movement for fundamental change. Rarely has the importance of unity in struggle been more compelling along an axis of class independence.

Only by our own independent mobilization of working people across America can we open the way to addressing a people’s agenda. The MWM and OWS are both about building grassroots and rank-and-file, anti-racist unity, forging the fightback on all governmental and corporate policies influenced and or directed by Wall Street.

Lets take it to the corporate state; let the 1 percent take the weight. □

On the Picket Line

By Sue Davis

Philly office cleaners win contract

The afternoon before a strike deadline was set to expire at one minute after midnight on Oct. 19, hundreds of Service Employees Local 32BJ janitors and building engineers, dressed in the union's trademark purple, marched south on Philadelphia's Broad Street to Locust Street for a rally outside the building where contract talks were being held. No wonder the owners of about 100 of the city's biggest high-rise office buildings coughed up a decent four-year contract for the 2,650 workers at the eleventh hour. On-the-scene WW reporter Joe Piette speculated that what also helped avert the strike was that "the owners must have feared the presence of the Occupy Philly encampment as a ready-made source of bodies ready to help fight in solidarity." The new contract will boost wages by 7 percent over the course of the contract, with a \$600 bonus this year, while maintaining employer-aid pensions and health care coverage. An Oct. 19 Philadelphia Inquirer article noted: "Stakes were high for this round of negotiations — the contract in Philadelphia is among the first in a wave of contracts that come up this fall in East Coast cities." May 32BJ continue to prevail!

AFL-CIO joins OWS in 200+ cities

Little did the AFL-CIO know when it called "America Wants to Work National Week of Action" starting Oct. 10 that the Occupy Wall Street movement would spread like wildfire all over the country. Union members from Minneapolis to Baton Rouge, La., and from Vermont to Oregon ended up joining the young activists to demand jobs and protest the big banks and corporate greed in more than 200 cities. As AFL-CIO official Dennis LeBounty told the Burlington Free Press in Vermont, "The message needs to get through that the rich should pay their fair share and that you can't balance the budget on the backs of working men and women." (Oct. 15)

ILWU Local 21 struggle continues

International Longshore and Warehouse Union members at six Pacific Coast grain exporters approved a new, one-year contract on Oct. 19 with a pay increase, full medical benefits and contributions to the pension plan. Meanwhile, ILWU Local 21 members at the Port of Longview, Wash., and two terminals at the Port of Kalama, Wash., were not included in the agreement. Local 21 members are continuing the fight to save their jobs at the new EGT grain terminal in Longview. (www.tdn.com, Oct. 19)

Ohio women workers say 'No' on Issue 2

On Oct. 18, a panel of working women in Cleveland agreed that women workers will be hard hit if the Ohio law taking away collective bargaining rights from public sector workers is not overturned on Nov. 8. That's why they urge everyone who cares about equality for women and good working conditions to vote "No" on Issue 2. For example, Tracey Wright, a firefighter with the Youngstown Fire Department and the first woman captain, stated that because of collective bargaining, "I am afforded the same wages, benefits and promotional opportunities as my brother firefighters." The same applies to other oppressed workers — people of color and the lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer communities.

History textbooks ignore unions' role

A new study, sponsored by the American Labor Studies Center, found that history textbooks present labor history in a biased, negative way. They focus on strikes and strike violence without any mention of the vile, oppressive working conditions and the employer abuse and violence that lead to strikes. In addition, "American Labor and U.S. History Textbooks: How Labor's Story Is Distorted in High School History Textbooks," shows that the four major textbooks in use today virtually ignore the role of unions in passing worker protections and reforms such as the eight-hour day, Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, occupational safety and health, the end of child labor and environmental safeguards; that unions supported the Civil Rights movement; and that organizing public workers in the 1960s into unions gave rights and decent living standards to millions of public employees. (AFL-CIO Now Blog, Sept. 6) □

Will Chrysler workers reject concession contract?

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

As of this writing on Oct. 24, workers are still voting on a four-year contract between Chrysler and the United Auto Workers. Ratification is not a sure thing.

Like the recently passed contracts at General Motors and Ford, the contract turns back the clock on 60 years of gains won through struggle. The carrots dangled by GM and Ford bosses and approved by Wall Street were bonuses for workers totaling \$8,000 and \$12,000 each, respectively. In exchange, such established union standards as the cost-of-living allowance, premium pay after eight hours and on weekends, and "equal pay for equal work" were given up. There were other concessions such as fewer holidays, shorter breaks, frozen or cut pay for all but the lowest paid workers, pension reductions and a draconian attendance policy.

Scare tactics were employed by the UAW leadership, which openly touts their "partnership" with the Detroit Three companies. GM workers were told that this was the best the union could get under a no-strike clause imposed during the 2009 bankruptcy. Ford workers, on the other hand, were told that if they voted no they would have to go on strike and Ford could hire permanent replacements. Nevertheless, over a third of the workers at those two companies voted "no" and a number of UAW locals rejected the contract by wide margins.

For the most part the Chrysler agreement mirrored the Ford/GM pattern, but with one exception: The "ratification bonus" was cut from \$5,000-\$6,000 at the other two automakers to \$3,500 at Chrysler. The real clincher was that only \$1,750 was guaranteed. The other half would depend on the company achieving financial results that could not be guaranteed. Annual bonuses were also only half of what GM and one-third of what Ford agreed to pay.

This was a slap in the face to workers who have not had a raise in five years. They were infuriated by the belligerent "vote yes or else" attitude of Chrysler and Fiat CEO Sergio Marchionne. The first locals to vote ap-

'Bail out the people' Occupy homes!

Continued from page 3

off debt service, while schools lack funds to pay for toilet paper. Casino tax dollars, hailed as the savior of the city, go to a trustee to be turned over to the "banksters."

We need to join with workers and oppressed people from around the world, from Greece to Latin America, in demanding a moratorium on debt service to these criminal banks.

The Occupy Wall Street movement provides an opening to raise these demands and take direct action to demand that the government "bail out the people, not the banks" as a transition to eliminating the capitalist system and creating a socialist world where the capitalists are relegated to the dustbin of history where they belong, and people's needs dictate the agenda. □

proved the contract, but some votes were close. By the second day of voting, three locals — including this writer's Local 869 in Warren, Mich. — had turned the agreement down.

Workers felt strong. Local 869 members commented, "I'm so glad that we stood up" and, "Finally after 19 years we voted down an agreement" and, "In all my years of fighting concessions I have never been so proud." Workers gave the thumbs up. They felt they had sent a message to Marchionne, who reportedly made the statement during the 2009 Chrysler bankruptcy discussions — which led to Fiat gaining up to 35 percent ownership of Chrysler at no cost to Fiat — that "the UAW has to get used to a culture of poverty."

Union leadership wants 'competitive' companies

While the cheap lump sum may have been what provoked workers to vote no, the worst aspect of the contract is the divisive two-tier pay structure. Although this contract keeps "entry level" workers making \$9 an hour less than everyone else, for them this is a substantial pay increase. UAW staff reps patrolled the plants, telling workers they would likely lose that raise if the contract is defeated and put in the hands of an arbitrator.

In reality, one can't predict how an arbitrator might rule. Arbitration is intended to reduce "labor strife" by letting a neutral party resolve disputes. It disempowers workers by taking away the strike weapon. With this contract, however, striking is already legally limited. The union is confined to arguing at the bargaining table. There is no reason to believe that an arbitrator, who at least professes neutrality, would broker a worse deal than Marchionne, whose anti-union attitudes are public knowledge.

Moreover, the UAW could still resist if it wanted to. The union can strike over local contract issues. The pressure from the company on workers to vote yes could be the basis of an Unfair Labor Practice strike. An in-plant "work to rule" slowdown could be conducted. A "corporate campaign" could be waged against Chrysler's major lenders. In fact, the UAW is already boycotting Chase Bank over the foreclosure issue.

The problem is that the International union won't fight. To justify the lower bonuses, local union officials distributed leaflets that implied Chrysler was struggling financially. Workers at the Toledo Jeep plant, who are not covered by the no-strike language, were reportedly told by UAW Vice President General Holielfield that the UAW knows it could strike individual plants but opted not to because it would hurt the company.

Getting back COLA, ending two-tier, restoring the 3 percent "annual improvement factor" raises of the past, and ending work schedules that undermine the eight-hour day are things that should have been brought to the table. It is one thing to make demands and not win them. The UAW would be up against the company bosses, Wall Street, the state and the media. The outrage is in not even making just demands. UAW President Bob King stated that he did not want to make the companies "uncompetitive" by adding "fixed costs" like pay raises.

King openly backs the Occupy Wall Street movement, but with his own members he is shilling for the 1 percent. Autoworkers aren't happy. In the words of one Local 869 member who voted no, "We are the 99 percent whether they like it or not."

Grevatt has been a Chrysler worker and UAW member for the last 24 years.



On Oct. 20, more than 50 demonstrators marched from the Liberty Bell to the sidewalk outside the immigration court, where undocumented youth bravely explained how their family's undocumented status has deprived them of education, job rights and even the right to live in the country they grew up in. DreamActivist Pennsylvania members spoke out against the massive deportations of youth and their families, enforced through federal regulations such as Secure Communities, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement's 287(g) program, and other repressive laws.

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

OWS spreads through U.S.,

By LeiLani Dowell
New York

Throughout the country, the Occupy Wall Street movement continues to defy the cops, make demands for social and economic justice, and provide spaces for solidarity and anti-capitalist momentum. The following is a snapshot of people’s occupations taking place:

In **Chicago**, police arrested 130 people who defied police orders to clear out of Occupy Chicago in Grant Park. The weekend before, 175 arrests had been made at the same location. Eleven members of Occupy **Cincinnati** were arrested and charged with criminal trespass on Oct. 23.

NEW YORK

In **New York City**, Occupy Wall Street has spread from Manhattan to Harlem and the borough of Queens. On Oct. 21, dozens were arrested, including a large contingent from OWS, after a march from the Harlem State Office Building to Harlem’s 28th Police Precinct to protest the New York Police Department’s stop-and-frisk program. According to the New York Civil Liberties Union, more than 85 percent of those harassed by police under the program are Black or Latino/a. A solidarity march to the 33rd Precinct, where those arrested were said to be held, ensued. The day’s events were organized in solidarity with Occupy Harlem, which is scheduled to begin on Oct. 28. (occupy-wallst.org)

That same day, members of the Muslim communities held Jumma Prayer at Zucotti Park, the location of OWS.

If not for the helicopter overhead and the lineup of police and their vans outside of the Symphony Space concert venue on the evening of Oct. 21, most Upper West Side residents strolling down Broadway would not have known their neighborhood was about to be “occupied.” At about 10:30 p.m., a crowd emerged from the theatre following a concert by Pete Seeger, Tao Rodriguez-Seeger, David Amram, Arlo Guthrie and others. Like Pan Pipers, they led a lively OWS march down Broadway, picking up parents with strollers and others who eagerly came out of shops and restaurants and down from their apartments to join the march or raise their fists in support. Accompanied by guitars, a flute, an accordion and various other instruments, they sang union solidarity songs and traditional Seeger and Guthrie favorites. According to the Associated Press, 1,000 people ultimately converged on Columbus Circle, where the 92-year-old Seeger led them in song.

After immigrant and workers’ rights organizations gathered for the founding event of the International Migrants Al-



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

liance in **Jackson Heights, Queens**, on Oct. 23, they then marched to the Manuel Unanue Park for a symbolic Occupy Queens, featuring speakers and cultural performances. Organizers of the event stated that the march was dedicated to supporting and standing in solidarity with the OWS movement. “IMA and the other groups ... recognize that the economic crisis devastating so many workers’ lives is in essence what is behind the Occupy Wall Street movement. ... The special onerous conditions for immigrants will be emphasized Sunday at Occupy Queens,” a press statement reads.

In a mobilization in support of public education, OWS members plan to occupy a meeting of the Department of Education on Oct. 25. According to organizers, the meeting is being hosted by the Panel for Educational Policy, an unelected, 13-member body that makes all decisions for the DOE.

The Jobless Avengers Working Group is meeting on Oct. 28. That same day, protesters at OWS will wear kaffiyehs, a symbol of Palestinian resistance, in support of Palestinian political prisoners and in solidarity with the people of Palestine in general.

A People’s Video Network video, “Voices of Occupy Wall Street,” can be seen at tinyurl.com/6k5kg93.

PHILADELPHIA

Occupy Philadelphia entered day 18 on Oct. 23. A well-organized community has sprung up around City Hall complete with a medical tent, legal tent, library, food tent, security, housing and general information, and a wide range of outlets for political and economic struggles.

route. Once there, nearly 200 protesters jammed Wharton’s lobby to push demands for income equality, chanting, “Occupy Philly! Occupy Penn! Occupy Wharton!” They promised to return.

The first arrests at Occupy Philly occurred at noon on Oct. 23, after dozens had taken over the streets outside Philadelphia’s police headquarters the night before to protest police brutality. In a clear statement condemning the role police play in protecting, supporting and enforcing the interests of the CEOs, superrich and politicians, 14 demonstrators willing to risk arrest sat in, in solidarity with those who have been silenced and terrorized by police brutality in Philadelphia. Among the demands was one to reopen the case of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

DETROIT

Protesters called out by Occupy Detroit descended on the Bank of America branch in downtown Detroit on Oct. 18 and again on Oct. 21 to demand an immediate moratorium on home foreclosures. The People Before Banks Coalition and the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs helped bring out hundreds of community, religious, union and social justice activists. People’s anti-foreclosure attorney Vanessa Fluker told Workers World that the actions at BofA were crucial in helping to save her client’s home. Occupy Detroit has held an ongoing encampment in Grand Circus Park since Oct. 14.

ROCHESTER, N.Y.

The General Assembly of Occupy Rochester has decided to physically occupy Washington Square Park in downtown Rochester, located two and a half blocks from daily protests at the Liberty Pole. The Band of Rebels demonstrates in front of the Bank of America, located across the street from the Liberty Pole, every Monday at noon.

On Oct. 18, union leaders and workers from the Rochester Central Labor Council joined Occupy Rochester for a demonstration and press conference supporting the extension of the millionaire’s tax in New York state. About 200 people attended.

On Oct. 20, protesters from Occupy Rochester marched from the Liberty Pole to City Hall, where they protested the police’s killing of Hayden Blackman only days before. From the doorway of his apartment, Police officer Randy Book shot Blackman three times. Blackman’s family and supporters joined the other protesters. They then packed a meeting of the newly formed Police Commission, which is supposed to investigate police abuse. Several witnesses gave vivid and moving personal testimony of police brutality. Both the witnesses and those attending strongly urged the formation of a truly independent, civilian review board controlled by the community, not the police.



PHOTO: JANET MAYES



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

... makes space for struggle

Nov. 5 People's Assembly to unify worker, community demands & OWS movement

By Dee Knight

The People's Assembly at Hostos College in the Bronx, N.Y., scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 5, has the ingredients for a unifying moment, bringing workers' and communities' struggles together with the mushrooming Occupy Wall Street movement. Outreach in the Bronx has focused on postal workers' unions, parents' associations and tenants' groups. People are excited to know they will be encouraged to speak up for themselves as well as hear from others with the same problems.

Members of CASA, a large tenant organizing group serving 5,000 residents of formerly abandoned buildings in the Highbridge neighborhood, responded to a call to make their knowledge and experience in fighting landlords available to other tenants throughout the city.

The presidents of parents associations in District 12 of the South Bronx are mobilizing their members to participate, focusing on all the issues that concern working people. Free child care will be available at the Assembly.

"Woodlawn is Wall Street"

In the Bronx, the embattled Band of Brothers — workers at Woodlawn Cemetery — are waging a determined fightback against racist abuse and anti-union intimidation, and have called on the Wall Street occupiers to join them. "Woodlawn is Wall Street,"

declared Rick Coss, steward of Teamsters Local 808 at Woodlawn.

A march and rally at the cemetery's main gate, slated for Nov. 12 — one week after the People's Assembly — is part of a "Bronx protest marathon" that includes a campaign to save the Postal Service and an ongoing struggle against poverty and violence. On Oct. 29, a March Against Poverty and Violence will take place in the superoppressed Mott Haven neighborhood — an area made famous by Jonathan Kozol's book, "Savage Inequalities."

The call to "Occupy the Bronx" came to life on Oct. 22, as hundreds of people rallied at Fordham Plaza, in the heart of the Bronx and about halfway between the South Bronx and Woodlawn Cemetery.

Community struggles are at the center of the Bronx movement: the people's right to decent housing, quality education, health services and jobs. A fury is brewing at the threat of massive job cuts and shutdowns of the Postal Service in the midst of the current crisis. Organizers have begun a survey of post offices and their surrounding neighborhoods, to determine which should be primary targets in the expanding "occupy" movement.

Plans for action

The People's Assembly will be about action, according to South Bronx Communi-

ty Congress organizers. A march for jobs with union rights and benefits is planned for Nov. 17, called by the New York Civic Participation Project of SEIU 32BJ. The march will start at the High Bridge, which spans the Harlem River between Manhattan's Washington Heights neighborhood and University Heights (near Bronx Community College) on the Bronx side. This target highlights the need for a massive program to revive crumbling infrastructure — an effort that requires a large-scale public works program like the Work Projects Administration of the 1930s.

"Food Is a Right" is another key demand. About a third of the 1.4 million residents of the Bronx qualify for food subsidies under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. They face threats of service cutoffs, while the program's complex and contemptuous application program effectively bars many from receiving benefits. Hundreds of people have mobilized to fight for their right to food, and a bigger campaign is in the works. Community Congress organizers are also discussing moves to increase food self-sufficiency like those pioneered by the Black Panthers and Young Lords in the 1960s and 1970s.

The concerns of youth — and their right to a future — are high on the agenda. The New York Police Department's "stop and frisk" program is a daily personal real-

ity for most youth who live in the poor neighborhoods of the South Bronx, Harlem, Brooklyn and Queens. The message is clear: "If you're young, nonwhite, and walking on a public street, you're a suspect." The People's Assembly will take up how to turn the tables and put the system on trial for its many crimes against youth, and struggle for real change, focusing on the rights to decent jobs, debt-free education, and a future with better alternatives than prison or war.

A movement for people's power

The People's Assembly will focus on building people's power and building links between the communities of working and oppressed people and the "occupy" movement. There is a deep desire to respond to the call of the people-of-color working group at Occupy Wall Street, and "build a racially conscious and inclusive movement." The People's Assembly will prioritize communities of color — including immigrant, undocumented and low-wage workers, prisoners, LGBTQ people of color, marginalized religious communities such as Muslims, and Indigenous peoples, and those whose responsibilities do not allow them to participate in the occupation. The goal is to make the movement accessible to all, and thus become a real movement for people's power. □



WW PHOTOS: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

OWS actions are growing across Wisconsin. On Oct. 22, **Occupy Appleton**, Wis., protesters marched on the main Chase bank in downtown, chanting, "Bail out the people, not the banks!" That same day, the **Occupy Eau Claire**, Wis., group sponsored a demonstration at Owen Park.

Occupy Milwaukee, which is now operating from Garden Park in the Riverwest neighborhood of Milwaukee, sponsored a protest at M&I Bank on Oct. 20. Austin Thompson, an African-American organizer, was arrested for disorderly conduct and put in the Milwaukee County Jail for the night. Occupy Milwaukee mobilized to win his release the next day. Supporters are now calling the district attorney to have Thompson's disorderly conduct charge dropped and working to pack the court for his scheduled appearance.

Occupy Milwaukee is now mobilizing for an Oct. 29 march beginning at 12 noon at Lincoln Park. Occupy The Hood-Milwaukee, a group focused on issues of people of color, is mobilizing for a Nov. 12 event in Milwaukee.

Occupy Green Bay, Wis., continues to meet at the County Courthouse on various days, and **Occupy Sheboygan**, Wis., be-



Rochester

gan its weekly General Assembly meetings, which will take place every Friday at 4 p.m. at Fountain Park. **Occupy Madison**, Wis., is ongoing and sponsoring various events.

All of the OWS groups in Wisconsin have Facebook pages and are mobilizing speak-outs, leafleting days at banks and more. For more information and frequent updates visit www.wibailoutpeople.org.

CALIFORNIA

The Labor Video Project reports that hundreds of **Occupy Oakland**, Calif., supporters attended an Oct. 22 rally in defense of the occupation. ILWU Local 10 Executive Board member Clarence Thomas called on the entire labor movement to defend the occupation against threats by Mayor Jean Quan and the city of Oakland to shut it down. Other speakers included members of the California Nurses Association and the Industrial Workers of the World.

Occupy San Francisco is calling for an Occupy Education day on Nov. 16, when the University of California Board of Regents will meet to discuss and possibly vote on a proposal to raise student fees by up to 81 percent over the next four years.

A statement by Occupy San Francisco reads: "They say cuts are inevitable because there are no funds — but we know that if we really taxed the corporations, ended the wars, or took back the bailout

funds, there would be no budget shortfall. They say we have to accept— but we know that if we take mass collective action, we can defeat these attacks."

A rally of close to 1,000 people marched to the Civic Center, the site of **Occupy San Diego**, on Oct. 15. A few days later on Oct. 20, walkouts under the banner of "Occupy Higher Education" were held on the campuses of California State University San Marcos, Grossmont College, Palomar Community College, San Diego State University, UC San Diego and the University of San Diego.

It was a day of huge, loud and militant marches with chants targeting the corporate elite, the banks and government bailouts to them in Los Angeles. A march that began at Pershing Square ended at the site of **Occupy Los Angeles**, which by then had grown to almost 700 people.

The character of the occupation at City Hall, in downtown Los Angeles, resumed with its usual hustle and bustle of varied activities — from educational talks on various subjects, spanning politics and spirituality to constant drumming, music, food distribution and more. But, there was an added element that evening after the long march. At 6:30 p.m. on a big screen provided by the Occupy L.A. General As-



PHOTO: SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA (COMMUNIST)

In a show of solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Socialist Unity Center of India (Communist) has organized street meetings and rallies in a number of Indian metropolitan areas and cities. In Kolkata on Oct. 19, protesters marched more than two miles to the "American Center" at the U.S. Consulate General. As police blocked the road, a protest meeting was held and an effigy of an octopus was burned to signify the destruction of the grip of capital over society. Protest leaders urged people to rise up against Indian capitalism.

sembly, Workers World Party sponsored a film showing of "Cuba: In Defense of Socialism — Fighting Imperialism." As soon as the film began, a large crowd formed a half shell around the screen, seemingly in awe of Cuba's contributions to building the kind of society many of them are discussing at these occupations nationwide.

After the film, Aracely Espinosa and Mike Martinez answered questions about Cuba and countered one individual's parroting of the State Department lies regarding Cuba's "lack of democracy." Regardless of that incident, the film and comments made one thing absolutely clear to 99 percent of those who consider themselves "the 99 Percent" — they were being lied to about Cuba and socialism is a system worthy of further study.

Lydia Bayoneta, Kris Hamel, Janet Mayes, John Parker, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette and Gloria Verdieu contributed to this report.

GREECE

Sixth general strike confronts austerity plan

By John Catalinotto

The working class in Greece is taking up the challenge the European capitalist class has thrown against them. The unions held their sixth general strike to combat the government’s austerity program, this one for the 48 hours of Oct. 19-20 and with even more massive participation than earlier actions manifested.

The action’s high point was a demonstration of hundreds of thousands of people surrounding Parliament in downtown Athens on Oct. 20. The PAME trade union federation, close to the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), played a strong role in the action. Other unions, left groups and mass organizations of students and women also supported the struggle.

The courage of the workers in Greece is an example for workers throughout Europe and North America. They have thrown themselves into this struggle, which is not only against the Greek capitalists, but against the capitalist class of all of Europe. These latter are represented by the “Troika,” that is, the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The events of Greece — indeed the entire economic crisis of Europe — have been presented in a false light in the U.S.

corporate media. Somehow, according to the capitalist pundits, the Greeks have been too extravagant in government spending. They claim that a tight austerity plan in Greece and an intelligent “rescue” loan might stop the capitalist crisis from spreading to other countries and sparking another recession or depression.

The truth is that the crisis is not solvable by capitalist means. Even upturns in production wind up spreading new technology and eliminating jobs, thus exacerbating the crisis of overproduction. What is at stake in Greece is not whether the crisis will be overcome, but simply whether the bankers and billionaires will be able to make the working class pay the entire cost of their capitalist crisis.

Communists call for debt cancellation

Since the KKE and the PAME unions played such a big role in the strike, it is instructive to reproduce some of the comments of KKE General Secretary Aleka Papariga to the media following meetings Oct. 19 with various party leaders.

“From now on things will literally be decided by the mighty people and not by the negotiations,” she said. Calling on the people to go forward without fear, without illusions until the final victory, she added, “There is one solution: the wealth

which exists in this country must become the people’s. We must disengage from the bonds of the EU and unilaterally cancel the debt. There is no intermediate solution.” (inter.kke.gr, Oct. 19)

The second day, police estimated 120,000 people surrounded Parliament — a low estimate according to PAME — as Papariga addressed the crowd, saying, “The struggle doesn’t stop today, it will continue. This torrent must be more turbulent, more radical, more subversive. It can sweep everything away under one condition: that they won’t steal the victory in the nick of time as has happened many times before.” (inter.kke.gr, Oct. 20)

Clashes with ‘anarchists’ or provocateurs?

The New York Times and other corporate media distorted the mass character of the protests in Greece by concentrating their coverage on outbreaks of “violence” and especially on the direct attack by allegedly anarchist groups on the PAME and Communist contingent.

One can understand that some people might honestly feel it liberating to attack some symbol of their oppression, such as a bank headquarters or police station, whether or not this is a wise tactic.

But what happened in Greece was that some group pretending to be “anarchist”

attacked the organizers of a mass workers’ demonstration. There has been evidence from past strikes in Greece — and this happened in Barcelona in the Spanish state, too — that police and fascist elements have disguised themselves as anarchists to provoke confrontations in those situations and bring about police repression of demonstrators.

Thus the KKE evaluation has even more weight: “On the second day the forces of capital sought to suppress the strong political message of the workers. PAME had announced the encirclement of the Parliament for the time when the anti-worker measures were to be discussed and voted on by article with a roll call vote, at the request of the KKE.

“For this reason they [the pro-capitalist forces] mobilised and unleashed in a planned way organized groups with specific instructions and anarcho-fascists who with Molotov cocktails, stones, and other weapons that are used by the police, such as teargas and stun grenades, attempted to disperse the majestic rally of the workers and people in Syntagma and especially the part where PAME was concentrated.” (KKE statement on media, Oct. 21)

The provocation caused injuries to 80 PAME members but failed to disperse the demonstration. □

Chile’s students strike for free education

By John Catalinotto

Chile’s mass student organizations, with support from the organized working class, held a two-day general strike and demonstration demanding free university education on Oct. 18-19. Tens of thousands of students and workers participated, with the main demand being for free and universal higher education.

Last August the labor confederation CUT [Central Unitaria de Trabajadores] called and carried out a general strike. This time the unions backed the students’ actions and joined the demonstrations, but didn’t call a strike.

The students have been holding actions for their demands since last May 12. This was the 40th time they have come out into the streets since then. These demonstra-

tions have been the broadest and largest in Chile since the time before a Sept. 11, 1973, U.S.-backed military coup ended the democratically elected Popular Unity government headed by Salvador Allende.

As part of the privatization and neoliberalism imposed on Chile under the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, university education was privatized. Today many students finish university studies owing tens of thousands of dollars in tuition. Years of frustration under this system finally broke out into struggle last May.

On the second day of this latest strike, the morning of Oct. 19 at precisely 10 a.m., the student and teacher organizations and unions held actions “from the city of Antofagasta in the north down to Temuco in the south.” More than 300,000 took part,

according to the organizers, “all united around one message: Education shall be free for all.” (Junge Welt, Oct. 21)

During that day, Chilean police arrested 234 participants in the demonstration. There were a number of attacks by hooded figures against a city bus and some buildings, and police used these events as an excuse to attack parts of the student march. Student organizers suspect police provocateurs initiated the attacks.

Student leaders Camila Villejo and Giorgio Jackson, who had just returned from a European political tour and had put the Chilean students’ demands before international bodies, told the demonstrators they were more determined than ever to continue the struggle. (Junge Welt)

In an interview with BBC Mundo on the eve of the strike, the 23-year-old Villejo,

who is a member of the Communist Party of Chile, was asked to compare the Chilean movement with the Occupy Wall Street movements: “We sympathize and understand the struggle of the outraged ones,” said Vallejo, “but in Chile we have gone beyond the stage of discontent. Now, we must look ahead and build an alternative for the country.”

The different movements — Chile, Colombia, Brazil, France, Spain — have their own special conditions, said Vallejo, “but viewed as a whole, it is the struggle of those who have awakened to build a different model of society nationally and internationally.” The movements are similar in that each resists privatization or takes steps that bring them closer to winning that demand. □

Is the U.S. really withdrawing from Iraq?

By Gene Clancy

President Barack Obama has said that all U.S. forces will be out of Iraq by Dec. 31, but this does not mean that the war is over, or that aggression against the Iraqi people has ended.

While it is true that the administration suffered a diplomatic rebuff on Oct. 21 when the Iraqi government refused to grant immunity from Iraqi law to U.S. military forces, the U.S. is working feverishly to continue the war through the use of military contractors, i.e., mercenary soldiers.

Obama’s announcement was greeted with joy on the streets of Baghdad, where people want nothing more than to be out from under the repressive U.S. occupation. But many have expressed a deep skepticism about U.S. intentions. “I believe that the full withdrawal will be only in the media but there must be secret deals with the Americans to keep some American forces or members of the American intelligence,” said Raja Jaidr, a

resident of eastern Baghdad. “They won’t leave.” (Associated Press, Oct. 22)

These suspicions are well-founded. Despite assertions by the U.S. government that its military mission is complete, the fact is that their “mission” has been an almost complete disaster.

Since the invasion in 2003, 1 million members of the U.S. military have been deployed to Iraq, of whom 4,482 have been killed and 32,200 wounded. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been expended while former President George Bush’s promise to the ruling elites that Iraqi oil would more than pay for the war has gone unrealized.

For the Iraqi people the war has meant the almost total destruction of what was once one of the most progressive and prosperous countries of the Middle East. The war — and the economic sanctions which preceded it — killed millions, devastated the infrastructure and pushed back gains which had previously been made in the areas of women’s rights and religious tolerance.

A mercenary war

The U.S. is attempting to salvage some measure of success from its adventure by militarizing the State Department through the use of private contractors.

Under the new plan, about 16,000 personnel will be assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Iraq, about 1,700 of them diplomats, experts in fields such as business and agriculture and law enforcement officers, while around 5,000 will be security contractors to guard personnel and facilities including consulates, according to State Department figures.

The newly established Office of Security Cooperation in the Embassy will have a core staff of 160 civilians and uniformed military alongside 750 civilian contractors overseeing Pentagon assistance programs, including military training. They will be guarded, fed and housed by 3,500 additional contract personnel.

The Security Cooperation office will also operate out of 10 offices around the country, half of them shared with other

Embassy personnel. The Embassy will have consulates in Basra, Irbil and Kirkuk. The State Department will provide Iraqi police training with its own personnel.

“What’s unusual is the scale and the militarization of the foreign service” as it oversees the thousands of security personnel, said David Newton, a former U.S. ambassador to Iraq from 1984 to 1988. The agency will even run its own airline to shuttle staff around the country. “This is not the kind of thing that diplomats do,” he said. (Bloomberg Business Week, Oct. 22)

Spencer Ackerman of Wired Magazine has studied the State Department and concluded: “The State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security does not have a promising record when it comes to managing its mercenaries. The 2007 Nisour Square shootings by State’s security contractors, in which 17 Iraqi civilians were killed, marked one of the low points of the war. Now, State will be commanding a much larger security presence, the

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Don't blame Libya for the Lockerbie bombing

By Stephen Millies

Two hundred seventy people were killed in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, on Dec. 21, 1988. For 20 years Libya and its lynched leader, Col. Moammar Gadhafi, have been blamed for this great crime.

Mustafa Abdul Jalil, chair of the “National Transitional Council” of Libya, told the Swedish newspaper Expressen on Feb. 22 that he could prove Col. Gadhafi personally ordered the bombing.

That was eight months ago. Where’s the proof?

Were Libya and Gadhafi guilty? Jim Swire, an English doctor whose 24-year-old daughter died in the bombing, doesn’t think so.

He visited Abdelbaset al-Megrahi in a Scottish jail. The former head of security for Libyan Arab Airlines was convicted in 2001 of 270 counts of murder.

His co-defendant, Lamin Khalifa Fhimah, was acquitted, despite prosecutors

claiming that Megrahi couldn’t have planted the bomb without Fhimah’s assistance.

They were tried in a special court convened in the Netherlands, but with three Scottish judges.

The trial was a frame-up. One of the prosecution’s star witnesses, Ulrich Lumpert — who testified about the timer used in the bomb — admitted he lied. (The Herald, Scotland, Sept. 5, 2007)

Even the official who drew up the indictments against the two Libyans, Lord Peter Fraser, doubted the testimony of Tony Gauci, a crucial prosecution witness. (London Sunday Times, Oct. 23, 2005) Gauci, a Maltese shopkeeper who allegedly sold clothes that were in a suitcase with the bomb, was offered a 2-million-pound “award” for his testimony. (The Guardian, Oct. 2, 2007)

After Megrahi’s conviction was upheld on appeal, Austrian philosophy professor Dr. Hans Koechler called this ruling a “spectacular miscarriage of justice.” (BBC News, March 14, 2002) Koechler was one

of five official observers appointed by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Where’s the motive?

There was no motive for Libya to blow up the Pan Am plane. But there was certainly a motive for the apartheid regime that was then ruling South Africa.

At the end of 1988, the apartheid system was in a crisis. One general strike after another was shaking the fascist state. The African National Congress, the Communist Party and the unions were making the country ungovernable.

The South African army was crumbling. Earlier that year it had been decisively defeated by Angolan and Cuban forces at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola. White, draft-age men were fleeing South Africa.

The most unyielding elements in South Africa’s military and police didn’t want to concede power to the country’s Black majority.

In a similar situation, when the French colonialists were being kicked out of Al-

geria, a section of the French military rebelled. They formed the terrorist Secret Army Organization (OAS), which attempted to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle for recognizing Algerian independence.

Any genuine investigation of an aircraft bombing should start with who was killed. Among the 270 victims on the Pan Am flight was Bernt Carlsson, the U.N. commissioner for Namibia.

After a long, armed struggle waged by SWAPO, led by Sam Njomo, Namibia was on the verge of winning independence from South Africa. Carlsson was flying to New York to sign the independence accords. Namibia’s freedom would mean that the apartheid regime in South Africa would have to go, too.

Interestingly, South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha and other apartheid officials who were supposed to fly with Carlsson on Flight 103 either changed their flights or stayed in London.

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Gadhafi lynched by U.S.-NATO

Continued from page 1
were also involved.

The video shows people who appear to be NTC rebels beating and torturing Gadhafi, a series of gunshots and, later, the dead body being thrown onto a truck. Those in the crowd cheer and celebrate at the carnage.

In contravention of Islamic law and international norms, Gadhafi’s remains were put on display in a meat storage facility. People claiming to be rebellion supporters were allowed to view the body and take photographs. Gadhafi’s remains were not turned over to his family for a proper burial within the time period required by his religious and cultural traditions.

A massive cover-up is being attempted to deflect responsibility for his death away from U.S. imperialism and its collaborators in Libya. After international outrage over Gadhafi’s assassination escalated, the U.N., the U.S. and the NTC client regime called for an investigation into the circumstances of his death.

The U.S. has supported the anti-Gadhafi rebels for more than three decades. The U.N. Security Council voted to impose a so-called “no-fly zone” over Libya despite the fact that there was no evidence that alleged massacres had occurred in areas retaken by the government from the NTC forces.

The “no-fly zone” was a pretext for total war against the state of Libya. A naval blockade was imposed by the NATO countries; more than \$120 billion in foreign assets belonging to the government were frozen; the NTC rebels were armed, financed, promoted politically and given military cover by the U.S.-NATO countries and their allies in the region; the Pentagon-NATO air and naval forces conducted more than 20,000 sorties and 9,500 bombings; and corporate-government media campaigns were conducted against the Libyan government to justify the deliberate destruction of the most prosperous country on the African continent.

Despite the objection of the 53-member African Union, the U.S.-NATO states refused to negotiate and demanded that the government resign. The International Criminal Court in the Netherlands issued unsubstantiated charges and indictments against the Libyan leadership to further isolate the government amid a massive military invasion and bombing campaign.

Gadhafi’s assassination must be viewed within the broader context of the atrocities

engineered against the Libyan people by the U.S.-NATO alliance and their NTC rebels. A systematic racist campaign targeting Black Libyans and other Africans living and working inside the country has exposed the true nature of the opposition to Gadhafi.

Hundreds of dark-skinned people and other presumed and actual supporters of the Gadhafi government have been persecuted by the rebels. Numerous people have been beaten, tortured, driven out of their hometowns and cities, imprisoned and lynched in the same fashion as Gadhafi and other high-ranking officials.

The U.S.-NATO air campaign was specifically designed to destroy the national wealth and infrastructure of the country, which had achieved tremendous progress since the Al-Fateh Revolution of 1969 and the assumption of People’s Power in 1977.

In the same city where Gadhafi was assassinated, a massacre of 53 pro-government supporters was reported at a hotel. According to Human Rights Watch, “The hotel is in an area of the city that was under the control of anti-Gadhafi fighters from Misrata before the killings took place.” (Afrique en ligne, October 24)

HRW called upon the NTC to conduct an immediate investigation into the massacre. In a statement, HRW said: “We found 53 decomposing bodies, apparently Gadhafi supporters, at an abandoned hotel in Sirte, and some had their hands bound behind their backs when they were shot. ... This latest massacre seems part of a trend of killings, looting and other abuses committed by armed anti-Gadhafi fighters who consider themselves above the law.”

Gadhafi’s contributions to the African Revolution

Despite the imperialist-controlled media assertions that Gadhafi’s rule was solely characterized by undemocratic processes, many throughout the world admired the leader and paid tribute.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez called the fallen leader a martyr who died a hero. The Global Alternative Agenda African youth organization, based in Nigeria, called Gadhafi’s assassination “highly irresponsible, a breach of all international laws. It was barbaric and humiliating to all Africans. It must be condemned in the strongest terms.” (GAA Statement)

The Zimbabwe state newspaper Sunday Mail said on Oct. 23: “Gadhafi’s he-

roic last stand against NATO hegemony is a defining moment in this era of U.N.-backed imperialism. He could have fled Libya, but he did not. Col. Gadhafi chose to fight alongside his people in Libya, to his last breath. He stood his ground until the end, refusing to flee, choosing to be martyred on African soil.”

The paper noted that “Gadhafi’s legacy speaks for itself. He guaranteed the right to free education for everyone from elementary school right up to university and post-graduate studies, at home or abroad; free health care; 1:673 doctor-patient ratio, free electricity for all citizens; interest-free housing loans; and free land for farmers.”

The African National Congress, the ruling party in South Africa that gained tremendous support from the people of Libya during and after their struggle for national liberation, said: “It is regrettable that the Libyan conflict ended with the gruesome killing of the Libyan Leader Muammar Gadhafi. ... We once again call on western countries under the command of NATO to stop the bombardment of Libya and its people.” (ANC statement, Oct. 21)

A statement from the ANC Youth League calls Gadhafi an anti-imperialist martyr: “The ANCYL salutes Colonel Muammar Gadhafi, a brave soldier and fighter against the recolonization of the African continent. Brother Leader was ruthlessly killed by rebels armed by NATO forces who invaded Libya because of its natural resources. Brother Leader resisted imperialist domination of the African continent and never agreed to the continued draining of natural resources from beneath Africa’s soil. He understood and appreciated that Africa’s natural resources should be economically used to benefit the people of Africa.”

In the East African state of Uganda, 30,000 people attended a memorial service in honor of Gadhafi. In Nigeria, a former militia leader said that the Libyan leader would be avenged.

Reports in the aftermath of Gadhafi’s martyrdom indicated that his son and heir apparent, Seif al-Islam, was captured by the NTC rebels. Yet in a broadcast over the Libyan-owned Al-Rai satellite television in Syria, Seif issued a statement saying: “We continue our resistance. I am in Libya. I am alive, free and intend to go to the very end and exact revenge.” (hamsayeh.net, Oct. 24)

In response to the reported capture of Seif al-Islam, attorney Franklin Lamb in

an open letter asked if the heir apparent would survive to stand trial before the ICC. Lamb said that a delegation of lawyers hired by the Gadhafi family “have been advised by Gadhafi supporters in Libya and neighboring countries that the NTC at the direction of NATO fully intends to see Seif al-Islam killed before he can address the international media and his supporters, following the transfer of his father’s leadership authority to Seif on August 29, 2011.” (Oct. 21)

Lamb states, “We intend to prove in Court that NATO did repeatedly sanction others to carry out Muammar Gadhafi’s assassination and that his killers on October 20, 2011 knew that a large cash award awaited them if they killed Colonel Gadhafi, thus silencing him from testifying against NATO officials and current western leaders who led the eight month destruction of Libya.”

Why was Gadhafi killed?

Gadhafi was lynched in a vain attempt to end the resistance of the Libyan people against imperialist aggression. The extrajudicial killing is also designed to send a message to other opponents of imperialism in Africa, where the U.S. and NATO states are intervening at a rapid rate.

Africa is increasingly supplying larger amounts of oil and other strategic resources to the U.S. and Western European states. This attempt at regime change in Libya is also designed to impede the increasing cooperation between the People’s Republic of China and the African continent.

If the social justice and anti-war movements inside the U.S. and Europe are going to achieve any results aimed at ending militarism and austerity imposed by the banks and transnational corporations, they must seriously address the escalating imperialist aggression against the African continent, its people and leaders. The massacre of Libyan people and the attacks upon its government can only be viewed as a setback to working and oppressed people within the imperialist states who are suffering as a result of low-wage capitalism and wars of occupation abroad.

It will take an alliance of the working people in the capitalist states and around the world to bring down world imperialism. Only with the destruction of imperialism will there be an opportunity to achieve genuine peace and development throughout the planet. □

The state & Occupation U.

The chain reaction of protest occupations that has swept the United States has already reinvigorated the struggle for equality and for participation in decisions that affect the lives of the 300 million people the demonstrators call the 99 percent.

These occupations, beside raising protest to a new position of respect, have been universities of class struggle. After decades of what appeared to be political stagnation, there is a complete openness to discussion about what makes 21st-century capitalist society tick in the center of world imperialism.

On Sept. 24, the New York police sprayed pepper gas on Occupy Wall Street protesters near Union Square Park and the next week arrested 700 on the Brooklyn Bridge. At that time in this editorial space we began a discussion of the capitalist state based on Frederick Engels' book, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State." By "the state" we Marxists mean the standing army, the courts, the prisons and especially the police, who have the most direct contact with the demonstrators. These days we might also include the corporate media for its mind control, buttressing and rationalizing state repression.

Increased repression, recently most obvious in Cleveland, Ohio; Chicago; and Oakland, Calif., plus threats of repression in Atlanta and elsewhere, put the question of the state and the police again on the front burner at Occupation University.

Based on their salaries, police would be among the 99 percent, and not even at the top. But from the point of view of training, discipline, life experience and prevailing racist ideology, the police are servants of the 1 percent -- or really of the top 1 percent of that 1 percent. They maintain capitalist order.

Where there is large participation of youth of color in protest movements or where people come out against "stop and frisk" laws, this message has been brought to the occupations. In Atlanta, where the cops shot a Black youth in the back and killed him, this became part of the protest and clarified the repressive and racist role of the police.

The tiny number of rich people on top could never rule without their paid propagandists, without their miseducators and especially, when all else fails to deceive the people, without the clubs and guns of their professional police. Whether the police talk nice or scowl, they take orders from their paymasters, and their job is to keep the big capitalists on top.

Lenin's 'Imperialism' confirmed again

New data on global corporate control

By Deirdre Griswold

Researchers in Zurich, Switzerland, have used a powerful computer database to analyze which transnational companies dominate the world economy. Their findings, called "The network of global corporate control," appeared this summer at arxiv.org, an online publisher of scientific material.

Using information from the financial database ORBIS, which provided them with data on "37 million economic actors, both physical persons and firms located in 194 countries, and roughly 13 million directed and weighted ownership links (equity relations)," the team of scientists from ETH Zurich, headed by Stefania Vitali, used a new mathematical analysis to tease out the structures linking transnational corporations to their subsidiaries and to each other.

The result? Out of this vast number of corporate actors, in 2007 "a mere 147 companies controlled nearly 40 percent of the monetary value of all transnational corporations," wrote Rachel Ehrenberg in an article summarizing the group's findings. ("Financial world dominated by a few," Science News, Sept. 24)

The authors say their work is the first attempt ever made to plot the myriad connections among the transnationals,

defined as companies that have at least 10 percent of their wealth in more than one country. They describe the structure that emerged as resembling a "bowtie," with lots of corporate entities in the periphery but a small group at the center controlling the flow of wealth.

While the global capitalist economy today is vastly larger and more complex than a century ago when V.I. Lenin wrote his groundbreaking book "Imperialism," this attempt by mathematicians to penetrate the murky world of corporate and finance capital confirms what the leader of the Russian Revolution wrote in 1916.

Lenin showed how even then the big banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions of Europe and the United States had grown to dominate over all other forms of capital. He used the data then available to show that they had formed giant cartels that divided up the world markets into "spheres of influence."

Written during World War I, the book explained what drove capitalist nations to half-exterminate each other in the struggle for superprofits around the world. The message was clear: War and exploitation will continue as long as there is capitalism.

There is no such message in these recent findings. Rather, the research is directed at capitalist governments and multinational institutions that the authors hope will shape better policies.

However, coming at a time when the capitalist system is in a deepening crisis of overproduction that is being felt all over the world, this study dispels the theory that capitalism has somehow become more democratic because, for example, millions of people have to rely on pensions that invest in mutual funds.

As the Occupy Wall Street movement says, only a tiny number of the world's people really control the wealth. They are really much less than 1 percent and are concentrated in the major imperialist countries.

The top 50 control-holders in the world are listed in a table at the end of the study. Twenty-four of them are from the U.S. Most of their names are obscure: FMR Corp., The Capital Group and State Street are among the largest. But behind these names are many of the same old ruling-class families that have picked presidents and secretaries of state for generations to ensure that the U.S. government puts their class interests before anything else.

In the recent period, this has meant getting their hands on trillions of dollars in government bailout money when the markets turned sour, even as millions of workers lose their jobs and homes.

Lenin called imperialism "the highest and last stage of capitalism." How much longer will such a horrible system be allowed to endure? □

Interview with union organizer

'Women workers face extreme insecurity in India'

Workers World contributor Dante Strobino interviewed Meghna Sukumar, a young organizer with the Women's Workers Union, Garment and Fashion Workers section, on Sept. 24, the opening day of the United Electrical Workers union 72nd National Convention in Pittsburgh. Her union is part of the New Trade Union Initiative of India (NTUI). Sukumar was participating in the UE Young Activist international convergence, along with young militant trade unionists from some of the most progressive unions in France (CGT), Quebec (CSN), Mexico (FAT) Japan (Zenroren) and many young UE activists from across the U.S.

WW: On your website, the NTUI says that part of your mission is "to meet the challenges of the offensive against the working class, under capitalist globalization." What is your view about some of the challenges faced by unions and workers in India during this world capitalist economic crisis since 2008?

MS: I think the biggest challenge has been coping with the scope and pace of informalization of work in many industries. This means that there is a large workforce that not only works for wages far below living wages, but also workers who are working in extremely precarious conditions with no job security and no social security. Unions in India are struggling to organize [these] contract workers. Another huge battle has been resisting the tremendous offensive on the right to association and trade union rights. It is important that trade unions remain

independent and internalize democratic principles.

WW: Have conditions changed for workers in the past few years in India?

MS: I think there has been a renewed attack on trade union and collective bargaining rights. Especially in new industrial areas and Special Economic Zones, workers are facing tremendous obstacles from management and government to form or join unions of their choice.

WW: In June your union won passage of an important new labor law covering domestic workers. Can you tell us about that?

MS: The women workers' union in Chennai has been campaigning for recognition and regulation of domestic work for several years now. Our demand has been for the inclusion of domestic work under the Minimum Wages legislation in the state of Tamil Nadu and a demand for 30 rupees [U.S. \$.60] per hour as the minimum wage, a paid weekly day off and an annual bonus of one month's salary. While there has been no legislation passed for regulation of domestic work as yet, the historic convention on Rights of Domestic Workers that was adopted by the International Labor Organization this year, which the government of India voted in favor of, is definitely a step in the right direction. We will continue to campaign for bringing domestic workers within the ambit of labor laws.

WW: We have witnessed in the past year that young people and workers have led many rebellions across the world, mostly catalyzed by record unemployment and police brutality. How is your union re-

sponding to these conditions within India or elsewhere around the world?

MS: What we are witnessing around the world is definitely encouraging and is a resounding call for change. It is quite inevitable that it will be the youth that will take the lead in any such movement towards social change. The trade union movement must be prepared to give any such movement direction and energy.

WW: Why does your union focus on the leadership of women workers? Have you seen the capitalist crisis disproportionately affect women? If so, how?

MS: Without a doubt, women are disproportionately exploited. It is a clear case of how capitalism uses patriarchy and vice versa to ensure that women's work is unrecognized and grossly underpaid. In India, industries where women work have, on an average, much lower wages than industries with a primarily male workforce. The apparel industry is an apt example where the average daily wage is just over \$2. Moreover, women's work is only seen to be supplementary to a man's income in a family. Also, more and more new industries like auto parts and electronics are being set up which employ first-generation young women workers with absolutely no knowledge about their rights at the workplace. This makes them extremely vulnerable to violence and exploitation. For these and a host of other reasons, it is important to build women's leadership in unions so that women workers' issues are brought to the forefront.

WW: Were you shocked or did you

learn anything new about conditions in the U.S. in your meetings with young workers here?

MS: This has been my first interaction with workers in the U.S. Of course, we have been reading extensively about how the budget cuts have been affecting public sector workers' social security. But meeting many young workers and actually hearing about the struggles that they have been facing over the past couple of years has been a tremendous eye opener. It is surely going to be a tough fight ahead. □

French ships, U.S. drones attack Somalia as Kenyan troops invade

U.S.-backed regimes abet imperialist aggression

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

An all-out offensive against the Al-Shabaab Islamic resistance movement based in Somalia is currently underway in the southern region of this Horn of Africa nation. A combined force of U.S. Predator drones and French naval vessels is targeting four towns in the southern region so that Kenyan military forces on the ground can seize Kismayo, a port city under the control of Al-Shabaab. The city is a major source of trade and serves as the economic lifeline for the resistance movement, which has been labeled by the U.S. as a terrorist organization allied with al-Qaida.

Kenyan press reports on Oct. 23 indicated that French warships bombarded areas near Kismayo in efforts to support the land invasion and the ongoing Pentagon drone attacks. French diplomatic sources, as usual, denied these reports.

At least 4,000 Kenyan troops are fighting alongside the military forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the interim government based in Mogadishu that has little popular support and is largely subsidized by the U.S. The TFG is bolstered by the so-called African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), which encompasses 9,000 troops from the Washington-backed regimes of Uganda and Burundi.

Naval ships from Kenya fitted with heavy weapons are also said to be operating in Somalian territorial waters.

U.S. drone attacks have escalated against Somalia over the last few weeks. In just two days, Oct. 20 and 21, at least 66 people were reported killed in bombing raids carried out by these pilotless planes deployed by the CIA and the Pentagon.

French naval vessels were reported to have struck the town of Kuday near Kismayo. These attacks may be related to the abductions of several French nationals and a British citizen in Somalia in recent months.

U.S. officials told the Associated Press during the week of Oct. 17 that Washington was pressuring the Kenyan government to take action inside Somalia. Despite this admission, the White House is claiming that the Kenyan invasion took the Obama administration by surprise.

Kenyan military leaders are anticipating heavy fighting in their efforts to take the town of Afmadow. Heavy rains have stalled the Kenyan military advances as hundreds of residents have fled in order to avoid the impending assault.

Kenyan military spokesperson Maj. Emmanuel Chirchir said: “Most likely man-to-man battles will occur in Afmad-

ow. That is one of the areas we want to inflict trauma and damage on the al-Shabaab basically to reduce their effectiveness completely so that they do not exist as a force.” (Associated Press, Oct. 24)

Regional grouping calls for ‘no-fly zone’

In another development, the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has called for the imposition of a so-called “no-fly zone” and naval blockade against Somalia.

An innocuous-sounding “no-fly zone” resolution against Libya, passed last March by the U.N. Security Council, became the basis for a seven-month NATO bombing campaign that destroyed the infrastructure of the country, killed thousands of civilians, displaced hundreds of thousands of workers and led to the targeted assassinations of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, several members of his family and other top government officials in that oil-rich North African state.

The prevailing atmosphere within the governments of the U.S. and other imperialist countries is heavily geared toward military intervention in Africa. However, the most recent effort of these countries to get a sanctions resolution against Syria failed as China and Russia, citing what had happened to Libya, both exercised their veto.

The invasion of Somalia is closely related to the pro-Western policy imperatives of the IGAD/East Africa Community Political Initiative. Leading states within the IGAD/EAC Political Initiative include

Lockerbie

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Don’t blame Iran, either

If apartheid diehards were responsible for blowing up the Pan Am plane, the conspirators probably figured that Iran would be blamed for it.

A civilian plane, Iran Air Flight 655, had been blown out of the skies on July 3, 1988, over the Strait of Hormuz, by a missile launched by the U.S. Navy ship Vincennes. Among the 290 passengers who died were 66 children.

This terrorist act effectively ended the Iran-Iraq war. Although it paid \$61.8 million in compensation, the U.S. government still refuses to apologize for this crime.

If the U.S. claimed that Iran took revenge by bombing Pan Am Flight 103, South Africa would be needed in a new war. Apartheid might be given a new lease on life.

But the first Bush administration that was coming into office already had made its plans to invade Iraq. Libya served as an alternative scapegoat.

One of the biggest blows to apartheid was when Iranian workers stopped oil shipments to South Africa, which had previously gotten 60 percent of its petroleum from Iran.

We need to know the truth about who bombed Pan Am Flight 103 and other terrorist crimes. But don’t expect any help from the terrorists in the CIA and Pentagon.

Seventy-eight people died when Cubana Flight 455 was blown up on Oct. 6, 1976, by CIA assets Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada. This was retaliation for Cuba coming to Angola’s aid after the newly independent country had been invaded by South Africa.

Bosch, who died this April 27, was pardoned by the senior President George Bush in 1990. Posada still lives in Miami.

Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda. Their current governments have close political, economic and military ties to the U.S.

The ongoing Kenyan invasion of Somalia is illegal, says a Horn of Africa publication: “The Kenyan action contravenes the U.N. and African Union Charters and infringes the sovereignty of Somalia.” (Mareeg Online, Oct. 24)

This article refers to both the Kampala Accord, which was signed on June 9 and mandates the postponement of elections in Somalia for one year while the involvement of pro-Western interests in the country’s political process is ongoing, and the Communique of the International Contact Group, signed in Denmark on Sept. 29. Both documents make reference to a Regional Political Initiative which is not explained in detail.

Mareeg Online states that the current situation in Somalia provides a political framework which “serves the leaders of IGAD/EAC as an insurance coverage for their political abuses and corruption in their own countries and as a cash cow to receive special privileges and massive financial, military and diplomatic assistance from the U.S. administration and European countries. The clashes between Somali factions along the border with Kenya and the recent spate of kidnapping of foreign citizens from inside Kenya have disturbed the security and economic situation of Kenya, but they were not sufficient to justify a military invasion of Somalia.”

The Kenyan government, in preparation for the invasion, received helicopter gunships from the U.S. In addition, former Somalian TFG Minister of Defense Mohamed Gandhi “reached a personal understanding with Kenyan officials for the recruiting, training and arming of 2,000 troops selected from specific clans of the Jubba regions and asked for their relocation in the capital of Mogadishu.” (Mareeg Online)

The Horn of Africa nations and the entire East Africa region have strategic

interests for the U.S. and the European capitalist states. The Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean contain some of the most lucrative shipping lanes in the world, with billions of dollars of goods traveling through this region daily.

Oil has recently been discovered in Uganda. Kenya is a major area for the Western-oriented tourist industry. Somalia, which has been without a stable government for more than two decades, has posed a monumental challenge for U.S. imperialism, which has tried unsuccessfully to impose a stable government subordinate to its interests since 1992.

The Al-Shabaab resistance movement has taken control of large sections of the south and central regions of Somalia. Inside the capital of Mogadishu, the organization controls most of the city. Were it not for the presence of a CIA station, Predator drone missions and the U.S.-funded AMISOM forces, the Islamic group would have seized power long ago.

These developments in Somalia are taking place within the context of greater U.S. and NATO military intervention in Africa. In addition to their Libya mission, where the U.S. Africom military command conducted its first major operation on the continent, the U.S. imperialists have recently admitted to dispatching 100 military advisers and Special Forces commandos into four states in Central and East Africa.

Other reports indicate that the oil-producing state of Nigeria has stepped up its military cooperation with the U.S. and that the Gulf of Guinea is the scene of periodic war games conducted by the Pentagon in partnership with several governments in West Africa.

These military operations on the part of the imperialist countries are framed to the public as “humanitarian missions” designed to fight terrorism and protect civilians. Yet it is the U.S. involvement in Somalia that has destabilized the region and created the worst food and water crisis in the world. □

Perspective on Middle East struggle

Continued from page 2

cause it has impoverished the workers, developed corruption and denied others a voice in the government. Yet it hates Syria for hosting Palestinian leaders; for not giving up its claims to the Golan Heights; for refusing to sign a peace treaty with Israel; because it won’t end its relationship with Hezbollah or with Iran; and because it opposed the attack on Iraq in 2003.

Imperialism opposes Syria for the good things it has done.

The opposition to Assad is divided and without a clear anti-imperialist focus. Well-meaning Syrians may oppose Assad, but for diametrically opposed reasons than why the U.S. opposes him.

How U.S.-NATO are ‘helping’ Libya

Libya had another bourgeois nationalist government with a dual character, inconsistent in its treatment of working people and its opposition to imperialism.

Many groups and individuals in Africa defended Gadhafi because of aspects of his record in Africa and his support for the armed struggle in South Africa.

Yet some Arab groups here and in the Middle East opposed Gadhafi because he has repressed Libyans with different political views, because he cooperated with

Washington’s “war on terror” and its rendition program, and more.

While such policies deserved to be opposed, some otherwise progressive forces even called for NATO to intervene against Gadhafi.

The U.S.-NATO forces are the bosses in the Middle East and Northern Africa. The imperialists “helped” by destroying Libya’s civilian infrastructure and economy and by unilaterally bombing Libya. NATO’s assault on Libya is allowing Washington to get its military force, Africom, on African soil.

Imperialism and capitalism are always the main enemy. Imperialism is thoroughly reactionary and predatory. It has no progressive role to play. It only “helps” itself, at the expense of workers and oppressed people.

Our fate is tied to those whom imperialism oppresses abroad. We are in the same class camp. We have the same class enemy. An imperialist win abroad emboldens the capitalists in their attacks on workers here, while a defeat for them abroad weakens them here.

Workers and progressives here must oppose U.S. intervention in Syria. It would be the worst thing for oppressed people in the Middle East and for the working class and oppressed here, too. □

Iraq withdrawal?

Continued from page 8

equivalent of a heavy combat brigade. In July, Danger Room exclusively reported that the State Department blocked the congressionally appointed watchdog for Iraq from acquiring basic information about contractor security operations, such as the contractors’ rules of engagement.” (Talking Points Memo, Oct. 21)

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the U.S. intends to use the State Department and its contractors as a means of continuing its aggression in Iraq. It may also be a means of making sure that U.S. personnel get immunity from Iraqi law for any crimes they may commit in the future.

EDITORIAL:

Los imperialistas asesinan a Gadafi

Las noticias circularon por el mundo el 20-21 de Octubre diciendo que aviones de la OTAN habían golpeado a una caravana de coches que salían de Sirte en Libia, hiriendo a Moamar Gadafi, y que el líder libio fue capturado vivo y posteriormente asesinado. Los detalles de su muerte son superficiales y podrían estar deliberadamente distorsionados u oscurecidos por sus asesinos. Destaca este hecho principal: tomó la intervención de las fuerzas imperialistas de aire — incluyendo un avión estadounidense Predator sin piloto y un avión de guerra francés, para poner fin a la vida de este líder africano.

Así, el asesinato de Gadafi fue igual que el resto del llamado alzamiento en Libia: una completa creación de las potencias imperialistas en la OTAN. Como hemos dicho en esta columna anteriormente, los “rebeldes”: los líderes del Consejo Nacional de Transición, los monárquicos de Banghāzī y cualquier otra fuerza que se unió a la desarrapada cruzada contra el gobierno en Libia — no hubieran podido ganar una batalla sin el poderío aéreo, el reconocimiento, la logística, la financiación, la planificación y la intervención directa de la OTAN.

Esto significa que especialmente Francia, Bretaña e Italia, con pleno apoyo logístico de Estados Unidos, llevó a cabo una guerra — utilizando escasas fuerzas titeres libias — en un intento de recolonizar a Libia, al igual que los imperialistas han intentado recolonizar Iraq y Afganistán. Todavía, ninguno de estos intentos ha logrado completamente subyugar al pueblo, que sigue resistiendo heroicamente en cada ubicación. Ciertamente los imperialistas han traído miseria dondequiera que han hundido sus garras, pero en ningún lugar su dominio está asegurado.

Quienes se engañaron creyendo que este era un legítimo levantamiento popular en Libia, como aquellos en la vecina Egipto o Túnez — tienen que sentirse humillados escuchando hoy los discursos triunfantes de los jefes de gobiernos de la OTAN, Nicolas Sarkozy, David Cameron, Silvio Berlusconi y Barack Obama. Las palabras de los líderes imperialistas despotricando contra el Gadafi que asesinaron es prueba suficiente de que el líder libio murió tratando de luchar por la independencia de su país rico en petróleo de estas mismas potencias mundiales depredadoras.

Sin embargo, la lección más importante es que los Estados imperialistas y sus líderes no tienen ningún reparo sobre uso de la fuerza, rompiendo las leyes internacionales y simplemente asesinando a líderes de gobiernos. Son criminales de guerra. No merecen ningún respeto. En su lugar, lo que se merecen es ser sometidos a juicio.

En las últimas semanas cientos de miles de jóvenes han estado ocupando las plazas o manifestándose en las principales ciudades de los países encabezados por estos imperialistas. Este último asesinato debe reforzar su determinación de librar al mundo del sistema capitalista, que no sólo les priva de su futuro en su propio país, sino que trae dolor y miseria a gran parte de la humanidad.

¡Viva la lucha para liberar a Libia y al mundo del imperialismo y de los bancos y las corporaciones que lo sostienen! □



Anunciando una Cumbre en Contra del G20
ASAMBLEA POPULAR
AL COLEGIO HOSTOS EN EL BRONX
Savoy Manor – La calle 149 y Avenida Walton
Sábado, 5 de NOVIEMBRE
De las 12 a las 4 de la tarde (inscripción 11:30 am)

MOVIMIENTO RESCATE AL PUEBLO bailoutpeople.org

¿Por qué los sindicatos apoyan al movimiento OWS?

Por G. Dunkel
Nueva York

Casi todos los principales sindicatos nacionales - excepto en la industria de la construcción - y la AFL-CIO han respaldado Ocupar Wall Street. Pero lo más importante es que en las grandes ciudades han ofrecido un importante apoyo organizativo, financiero y político a este movimiento.

Nueva York, donde OWS se inició hace más de un mes, no sólo es la capital financiera del poder económico dominante del mundo, sino que también es la ciudad de los EE.UU. con el mayor porcentaje de trabajadores/as sindicalizados/as. Por la respuesta de los/as miembros de los sindicatos, está claro que este llamado tiene un amplio apoyo.

El apoyo sindical más grande fue el 5 de octubre cuando más de 30.000 personas – trabajadores/as del transporte y la comunicación, maestros/as y profesores/as con sus estudiantes, trabajadores/as de la salud y organizaciones de la comunidad - marcharon desde Foley Square, justo al norte de la Alcaldía, hasta el Parque Zuccotti/Plaza de la Libertad.

Incluso el sindicato de maestros/as del estado de NY, el New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) trajo dos autobuses desde Albany, en un viaje de más de tres horas. Las delegaciones de la Unión de Trabajadores de la Comunicación, (CWA), que está en una lucha amarga contra Verizon, marchó con OWS en Nueva York y San Francisco. Verizon ha acumulado más de \$20 mil millones en ganancias en los últimos cinco años.

El CWA suspendió sus dos semanas de huelga en contra de las operaciones de línea fija y FIOS de Verizon a mitad de agosto, cuando la empresa accedió a volver a la mesa de negociaciones. Desde entonces ha habido un poco de progreso pero la compañía sigue insistiendo en grandes recortes de los beneficios, en jubilación y en atención médica para obtener así aún mayores ganancias.

La noche del 13 al 14 octubre mostró la profundidad del apoyo del movimiento sindical para el OWS. La ciudad estaba amenazando con usar la excusa de que era necesario “limpiar” Zuccotti Park para proteger la salud pública y la seguridad. Esta “limpieza” hubiera significado el desalojo de los/as manifestantes.

Tan pronto se conoció la noticia,

la AFL-CIO hizo un llamado, junto con muchos otros sindicatos y organizaciones progresistas, para acudir y mostrar su solidaridad con los/as manifestantes.

Este fue un acto rápido sin precedente por parte de la AFL-CIO, poniéndose en una situación que no podía controlar y que contenía un elemento de confrontación con el poder del Estado. El llamado de la AFL-CIO dio un espacio para que los sindicatos locales de Nueva York le pidieran a sus miembros que si era posible, se presentaran inmediatamente en la Plaza de la Libertad para estar con los/as manifestantes.

La movilización fue un éxito y la ciudad pospuso el desalojo.

Leyendo los endosos de los sindicatos extraído del Occupied Wall Street Journal, (8 de octubre), y algunos publicados en el internet como los de la United Auto Workers y la Unión de Empleados de Servicios, el amplio acuerdo político entre los sindicatos y el movimiento OWS se vuelve más claro. Ambos se oponen a la codicia y las manipulaciones políticas que los banqueros de Wall Street y los administradores de fondos de inversión libre (hedge funds) utilizan para crear auges económicos - con las resultantes caídas.

Estos colapsos crean enormes pérdidas para los/as trabajadores/as que los sindicatos representan; se destruyen puestos de trabajo, viviendas, atención médica, educación y transporte público. Las ganancias y el poder de Wall Street sin embargo, fueron y siguen siendo sostenidas y mantenidas con miles de millones de dólares en rescates del gobierno. ¡“Los bancos consiguieron rescates! ¡Nosotros fuimos traicionados!” es una consigna frecuente en las marchas del OWS.

Algunas corrientes del movimiento OWS se están moviendo en una dirección anticapitalista que muchos sindicatos quizás no compartan todavía, pero aún hay un acuerdo político general.

El UAW envió muchos miembros a la marcha del 5 de octubre y tuvo un contingente de 50 a 100 miembros en la protesta del 15 de octubre contra los bancos llamada por el Comité Enfoque Sindical del OWS de Nueva York. Su respaldo no fue sólo una formalidad.

Mientras la fuerte lucha del CWA con Verizon ha influido claramente en el apoyo del sindicato para OWS, la importancia del conflicto entre el estado de Nueva York y sus sindicatos de servicios públicos ha sido

amortiguada.

El gobernador Andrew Cuomo, un demócrata, ha alegado que para mantener a los ricos en el estado de Nueva York, tiene que dejar que expire un recargo de impuestos que de lo contrario traería 5 mil millones de dólares el año próximo. Dado el mandato constitucional de Nueva York para equilibrar el presupuesto del estado, él decidió llenar ese vacío con recortes de servicio y exigencias en los contratos impuestos a los/as trabajadores/as estatales.

El sindicato mayor del estado es la Asociación de Empleados de Servicio Civil (CSEA por las siglas en inglés), Local 1000 de la Federación Americana de Empleados del Estado, Condado y Municipio (AFSCME). Es uno de los endosantes del OWS. CSEA, bajo la amenaza de despidos masivos, acordó un contrato de cinco años que dicta tres años de cero aumentos salariales y luego dos años con aumentos de sólo un 2 por ciento, además de 13 días sin trabajo ni sueldo y mayores costos por atención médica pagados por los/as trabajadores/as. Los/as trabajadores/as representados/as por el CSEA que ahora viven bajo el nuevo contrato están viendo sus sueldos más reducidos a cambio de un frágil acuerdo de cero despidos.

El segundo sindicato más grande del estado de Nueva York, la Federación de Empleados Públicos (PEF), que forma parte del NYSUT, rechazó un contrato similar a finales de septiembre. Un día después, salieron avisos de despido por correo electrónico y el estado comenzó a ajustar su contrato junto al liderazgo del PEF. Un acuerdo tentativo de un contrato de cuatro años ligeramente modificado fue alcanzado el 16 de octubre y debe ir pronto para un voto entre la membresía.

En un blog abierto del periódico en línea Albany Times-Union, parece haber un fuerte sentimiento en el PEF para otro voto de “no”, con muchas entradas refiriéndose al OWS. El rechazo en septiembre fue el primer voto de “no” en 34 años.

Cientos de miles de trabajadores/as estatales tienen contratos que ya han expirado o van a expirar pronto. Lo que está alimentando su enojo y desasosiego es que el estado y la ciudad utilizarán estos contratos draconianos y retrógrados con CSEA y PEF como estándares.

La lucha continúa, ahora con nuevos aliados/as mientras los/as trabajadores/as luchan contra los patronos. □

CONTINUÁN DEMANDADO SU LIBERTAD POR LOS CINCO CUBANOS.



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Rene González Sehwerert, Fernando González Llort and Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez